

My name is Tom McGowan. I am the Executive Director of the Lake Waramaug Task Force which is a non profit organization dedicated to the restoration of the environmental quality and water quality of Lake Waramaug in Warren, Washington and Kent Connecticut. On behalf of the Task Force I urge your support for adoption of Raised Bill 446.

In Connecticut the in-migration of even more damaging invasive aquatic plants will not abate unless the State of Connecticut supports a robust program as outline in 446. In New England Connecticut has the highest percentage of significant lakes and ponds infected with invasive aquatic plants. This can be attributed in large measure to the fact that Connecticut also has dedicated much less funds and man power than its sister states to control this invasion.

The program in 446 has all the key elements needed to help control further damage to State waters, to assist towns and educate the public on how to tackle the increasingly complex, environmentally and economic damaging effects of invasive aquatic species impacting our public lakes and ponds.

We have the brain power within the DEEP, the Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station and the University of Connecticut to do the job set forth in 446 --- if this mandate is adopted and the necessary resources are provided. Please realize that non profit lake organizations, such as the Connecticut Federation of Lakes, stand by ready to cooperate with such a State program as do other lake, environmental and economic development public and non profit programs.

Few realize that Connecticut already has a very detailed plan for the control of invasive aquatic. Key elements of this State Aquatic Nuisance Species Management Plan can be implemented with the adoption of 446. Connecticut urgently needs the legislature to approve 446 and act swiftly to implement its mandate under a cooperative program lead by State agencies and supported by non profit Non Governmental Organizations and a better educated public. That is what is making a big difference in slowing the spread and controlling invasive aquatics in New Hampshire, Maine and other New England states.

Let's get to it.

